

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Approved Minutes
December 8, 2016
Audioconference

Thursday, December 8

Chair Fields called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. All members were present by audio. The board, staff, and public recited the Pledge of Allegiance. The board approved the agenda. The board declared no conflicts of interest.

Public Comment

David Kohler, chair of the education committee of the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, expressed appreciation for the council's inclusion on the advisory council for the Every Student Succeeds Act and the stakeholder group that reviewed prospective assessment vendors.

Rep. Lora Reinbold said the Common Core in Alaska drives curriculum. She said the department should change its student standards before using a new assessment. She asked the department to keep costs down; protect student privacy; and not, in conflict with state law, require assessments.

Rick Smith, a retired teacher, said modernizing the education system should not throw money to classrooms without finding out if it helps. He noted the need for training teachers to use technology. He cited the usefulness of technology in connecting homeschool students to teachers.

Tim Parker, president of NEA-Alaska, thanked the board and department for their outreach to stakeholders in developing a state plan for the federal Every Student Succeeds Act. He said he appreciated moving ahead with a new statewide assessment but noted that there are other important indicators of student success. He said safety and well-being must exist before learning can happen.

Donna Levesque, a member of the Boreal Sun Charter School, described the Waldorf approach to education, which the school will use.

Dr. Lisa Parady, executive director of the Alaska Council of School Administrators, said she supports the goals of the board and department; her organization's resolutions are a good fit with those goals. She thanked the department for its process of choosing an assessment vendor and developing a state plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Work Session

Agenda Item 1. The Every Student Succeeds Act. Dr. Susan McCauley, education policy coordinator, reviewed the process of laying the foundation for a state plan by gathering input

from stakeholders since March. The department is seeking advice from tribal leaders on how to engage the tribes. The plan will be consistent with the board's mission, vision, and strategic objectives. Sondra Meredith, administrator of teacher certification and education, said the department has received the U.S. Department of Education's final regulations for the act; the state has until September 15, 2017, to submit a plan. The board and staff discussed the various allowable ways of rating schools. The board expressed a desire to see a draft state plan in March 2017.

Agenda Item 2. Assessment selection. Commissioner Johnson said he is confident about the process of selecting an assessment vendor and about the vendor, Data Recognition Corp. (DRC). Margaret McKinnon, director of assessment and accountability, reviewed the selection process and the positive aspects of DRC. To prepare school districts, the department will present webinars and meet in person with district test coordinators.

Agenda Item 3. Report to the legislature. Eric Fry, information officer, reviewed the draft report and noted board revisions.

Agenda Item 4. House Bill 278. The board discussed the need for a process to periodically review state standards. Dr. Keith Hamilton asked for a timeline to develop a process.

Agenda Item 5. Legislative and budget report. Marcy Herman, legislative liaison, reviewed legislative committee assignments.

Agenda Item 7A. Museum rental fees regulation. Rebecca Hattan, assistant attorney general, reviewed the proposed regulation, noting that it added specific fees for rental of facilities at the Andrew P. Kashevaroff building in Juneau.

Agenda Item 8A. Minimum expenditure on instruction. Elwin Blackwell, acting director of school finance, reviewed the proposed regulation, which was made necessary by the legislature's repeal of an enabling statute. Wilfried Zibell said he would abstain from voting because, with repeal, there won't be enough responsibility to ensure that districts' operating funds go toward student instruction.

Agenda Item 8B. Highly qualified teachers. Rebecca Hattan, assistant attorney general, reviewed the proposed regulation, noting that it removes all references in regulation to highly qualified teachers, an outdated term of art.

Agenda Item 6 taken out of order. Boreal Sun Charter School. Tal Harlan, chair of the school's academic policy committee, said the school is ready to open in August and has the support of its local school district. The board discussed open lotteries and whether state law allows charter schools to give preference to neighborhood students. Rebecca Himschoot asked the department to prepare a report on Alaska's charter schools.

Business Meeting

Agenda Item 9A. Museum rental fees regulation. John Harmon moved and Sue Hull seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment on 4 AAC 58.010 Fees. The motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Item 10A. Minimum expenditure on instruction. Sue Hull moved and Rebecca Himschoot seconded the following motion: After considering all public comment, I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt the proposed amendments to 4 AAC 09.115 Minimum expenditure for instruction and 4 AAC 09.120 Budget review. The motion passed 8-0 in a roll call vote, with Wilfried Zibell abstaining.

Agenda Item 10B. Highly qualified teachers. Rebecca Himschoot moved and John Harmon seconded the following motion: After considering all public comment, I move the State Board of Education and Early Development adopt the proposed amendments to 4 AAC 04.210 Highly qualified teachers; 4 AAC 04.212 Objective uniform standards; 4 AAC 12.380 Retired certificate (Type R); 4 AAC 18.021 Employment of substitute teachers; 4 AAC 06.895 Report Card to the Public; 4 AAC 06.899 Definitions; and 4 AAC 12.305 Teacher certificate (initial, professional, master). The motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote.

Agenda Items 11A-11E. Written reports to the board. The board asked to see the Commissioner's responses to concerns that are communicated directly to board members. The board discussed its duties as the board of education for Mt. Edgecumbe High School. John Harmon requested a document that defines the board's role. Sue Hull expressed concern that the board doesn't provide the same oversight to Mt. Edgecumbe as does a school district's board for its schools.

Agenda Item 12. Commissioner's report. Commissioner Johnson welcomed Sana Efird, the new deputy commissioner, and thanked Betty Walters, the outgoing acting deputy commissioner. The Commissioner said the department has done a lot of groundwork laying the foundation for the state plan to implement the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Agenda Item 13. Appointment of Sana Efird as deputy commissioner. Ms. Efird said she was excited about the opportunity and reviewed her background in education. Sue Hull moved and John Harmon seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development approve the Commissioner's appointment of Sana Efird as Deputy Commissioner, to commence on December 1. The motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote, with LTC Toole absent.

Agenda Item 14. Consent agenda. The board removed Item 14B, approval of the report to the legislature. Barbra Thompson moved and John Harmon seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development approve the consent agenda consisting of approval of the minutes of the September 13, 2016, meeting, the initial charter of the Boreal Sun Charter School, and the appointment of Elwin Blackwell as the department's federal impact aid representative. The motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote, with LTC Toole absent.

Agenda Item 15. Student advisor-elect. The board went into executive session, under AS 44.62.310 (c)(2), to interview candidates Kyle Hasse, Charlie Michael, and Shyanne Massie. In open session, Rebecca Himschoot moved and John Harmon seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education and Early Development select Charlie Michael as its Student Advisor-Elect for the remainder of the school year 2016-2017. On July 1, 2017, Charlie Michael's one-year term will begin as the student advisor to the board and continue through June 30, 2018. The motion passed unanimously in a roll call vote, with LTC Toole absent.

Board comments

Rebecca Himschoot said it was difficult to conduct the board's business by audioconference. She asked whether the board could join the National Association of State School Boards.

Wilfried Zibell thanked the student candidates and welcomed Charlie Michael.

John Harmon said he is encouraged by the direction the board is moving.

Kenny Gallahorn said simple is better and welcomed Charlie Michael.

Sue Hull said the board should consider professional development.

Dr. Keith Hamilton said the board's work is difficult by phone.

The board adjourned at 4:25 p.m.